

*Merry Christmas to All!*

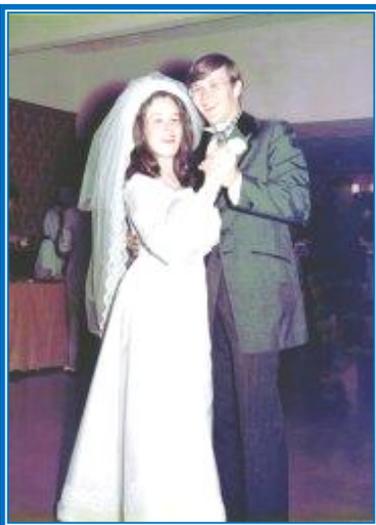
What do you know? Another year has roared on by and we don't know where the time has gone. Will try to conjure up what it was that kept us busy for the year...

Last December we managed a trip up to the Big Apple to visit our friends Nancy & Frank. We toured the Empire State Building, Ellis Island, Rockefeller Center, Macy's and best of all, Rolf's French Bavarian Restaurant. Rolf's really goes over the top to decorate for the holidays and it was lots of fun. Spending time with Nancy & Frank's family out on Long Island was really special. Christmas was spent with Michael, Rachel, Sam, Walker & Olivia at Michelle & Ross' lovely new home.



In May we headed off to Europe for a ten day adventure. We flew to Venice, Italy where we toured the Murano glass blowing factory, St Mark's Plaza, etc. for a couple of days before boarding our cruise ship to cruise the Greek Isles (Athens, Mykonos, Katakalon (Olympia), Corfu, ) and Split (Croatia). We had Mark's mom Phyllis, his sister Pat and her hubby Ted along as well as our dear friends Dave & Anne and Peggy & Ed. Ann's favorite thing about the trip seems to be a frozen confection called Magnum White (vanilla ice cream on a stick coated with white chocolate). She

sampled it every chance she got. She has yet to find anything like it here in the states.



In June we celebrated 36 years of marital bliss. We actually met 44 years ago at a military dependents cotillion dance when we were both 16.

In July Mark pulled a fast one and surprised Ann with a gathering of about 40 friends who joined us for some traditional North Carolina BBQ to celebrate her reaching the big Six Oh! Not to be out done she, with the



help of our friends Peggy & Ed, surprised Mark with a surprise birthday party in September. Of course, as with most July's we squeezed in a weekend at Myrtle Beach with Nancy & Frank followed by another weekend in Salter Path with our friends Peggy, Ed, Kay & Larry.

In August Ann made a quick trip to Tampa to be with her brother Tom and his family as he underwent surgery for colon cancer. Please keep them in your prayers while he continues his chemotherapy.

In September Ann enjoyed a weekend at the coast in Salter Path with her pals in her "Birthday Club" (Mark refers to them as the 13 steel magnolias from North Raleigh). Mark headed north to Virginia to see his nephew Tyson and his wife Yilu from Seattle who were visiting with Mark's mom. While there, Mark got in a visit to his dad's resting place in Arlington National Cemetery.

October brought a visit from Mark's sister Jo and her hubby John and a trip to Springfield, VA for a mini-reunion of Mark's family including his Uncle Dan & Aunt Ardith along with his cousin Danny with his two daughters. At the end of October Mark had some minor surgery that left him with a new zipper just above his navel.

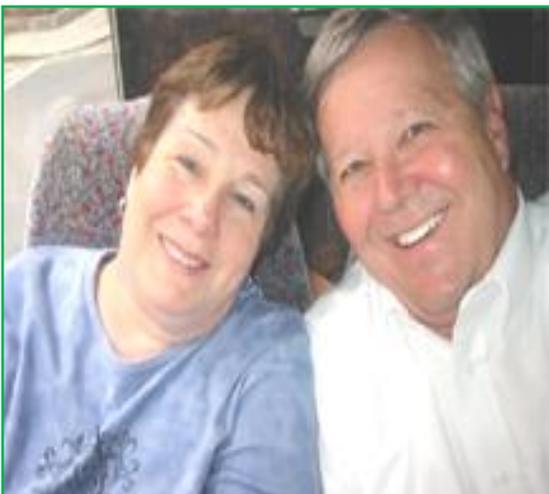


For Thanksgiving this year we went in on a beach rental at Nags Head, NC with Michael, Rachel and her parents Gary & Ruth Vogelpohl. We all just hung out at the beach and played with little Sam for four days. It was exhausting just to watch that little tyke go(whirl on Dervish!). He's starting to talk up a storm now too. For something to pass the time we walked on the beach, watched the Macy's Day Parade on TV and played cards. We even learned a fun new game called "Farkle". Maybe someday we can teach it to you.

In another couple of weeks we'll enjoy a weekend trip to Myrtle Beach with friends Ray & Judy and Kay & Larry. We've got tickets to see some of the Christmas theater shows and should enjoy some good seafood dinners out at the local restaurants. Of course the girls will have to hit all the outlet malls.

Christmas will be spent here in Raleigh. It's a real luxury to have our kids and grandkids within a half hour drive. If any of them have to scatter to visit with the other grandparents, that's OK. Being nearby, we get to see the kids most all year long.

Currently we have travel plans for early next November to take a 10-day Princess cruise from Ft Lauderdale to Aruba, Cartagena(Columbia), Puerto Limon(Costa Rica), Colon(Panama), The Panama Canal and Ocho Rios(Jamaica). Any one care to sail along?



All in all, we are grateful to God for our good fortunes, family & good friends and for sending us His son.

As always, our prayer is that this finds you all enjoying good health and good times in the company of those you love and admire most.

From our house to yours,

Best Wishes for a Merry Christmas & a Happy New Year!

Mark & Ann